Copies of the Dewan's Address in English, Malayalam and Tamil were distributed to the members, as also copies of the Administration Report of the State for 1100, in English and Malayalam, of the report on the operations of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for 1100, in English and Malayalam, of the "Statistics of Travancore" for 1100, in English, and of the memoranda of subjects in English, Malayalam and Tamil.

The Dewan announced that Sir P. Rajagopalachari, Dewan Bahadur Mr. M. Krishnan Nayar and Dewan Bahadur Mr. T. Raghaviah, C. S. I., former Dewans of the State, had sent their greetings to the Assembly.

The Dewan then opened the session with the following

ADDRESS.

GENTLEMEN,

In obedience to the gracious commands of Her Highness the Maha Rani Regent, I extend a welcome to you, representatives of the people of Travancore, to the Twenty-second Session of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. For the most part, you have been duly elected on a wide franchise of diverse communities and important interests. In respect of 23 out of the constituent 100 of this body, it has been the difficult task of the Government to find adequate representation, or any representation, of minorities and interests that have been unable to get in by the strength of their own vote. The smallness of the number which it is open to the Government to fill up by nomination makes it impossible every year to represent every community. Where all cannot come in at once, a just rotation has to be the Government's sole resource.

2. In this my first address to the Assembly, my task is mainly to draw attention to the many excellent results which the last year of the late administration has yielded to you as chronicled in the Administration Report, of which each of you has a copy. The report will give you food for thought and, possibly, carry your minds back to the larger advantages which my predecessor, Dewan Bahadur T. Raghaviah, was instrumental in securing for the State. He raised the revenues and expanded the resources of the country. He gave you a powerful voice in legislation and a firm grip on the purse-strings when he obtained the august approval of His Highness the late Maha Raja to Regulation II of 1097.

3. Personnel.—Since you last met, we have to record not merely the departure of the late Dewan but also the loss to the State of the valuable services of Rao Bahadur R. Viraraghava Aiyangar, Chief Justice; Messrs. P. J. Varghese and K. Jacob, Judges of the High Court; Mr. M. Rajaraja Varma, Devaswom Commissioner; Mr. K. Narayanan Pandalay, Chief Secretary to Government; Mr. L. C. Hodgson, Director of Public Instruction; Dewan Bahadur P. N. Lakshmanan, Darbar Physician; Messrs. M. V. Subrahmanya Aiyar and K. Parameswaran Pillai, Dewan Peishkars; Mr. R. Ananda Rao, Head Sirkar Vakil; Mr. V. Subba Aiyar, Additional Head Sirkar Vakil; Rao Bahadur John Kuriyan and Mr. K. Thanu Pillai, Executive Engineers; and, last but not least, that distinguished scholar, Mahamahopaddhyaya Dr. T. Ganapati Sastrigal. To all these gentlemen who have rendered good and faithful service to the State, I am sure, you, the representatives of the people, will desire to send your good wishes in their retirement. The hand of death has brought home to us the inestimable services rendered by that great engineer and stalwart upholder of the interests of Travancore, Mr. A. H. Bastow. The country also has to bemoan the loss of that great gentleman, Dewan Bahadur A. Govinda Pillai, for many years a Judge of the High Court. Another deplorable loss was that of Mr. C. Govinda Pillai, a most devoted servant of the Travancore Crown. This is a long list of deprivations; but, as a set-off, we have to congratulate ourselves on having secured for an extended term the services of Mr. H. S. Chatfield as Chief Justice of the High Court and of Mr. W. H. Pitt as Commissioner of Police. No less are we

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fortunate in finding Mr. K. George as the Chief Secretary and Mr. A. Venkatarama Aiyar as High Court Judge, worthily succeeded by Mr. V. S. Subrahmanya Aiyar as Head Sirkar Vakil.

4. Devaswoms.—Towards the close of the year it was Her Highness' pleasure to alter somewhat the arrangement for the control and management of the State Devaswoms. ' In so far as his responsibilities and duties in respect of temples, temple officials and religious rites and observances go, the Devaswom Commissioner was made independent of the Dewan and directly answerable to the Ruler; and to this enhanced status and responsibility, Mr. R. Krishna Pillai, Officiating Dewan, was called by Her Highness.

5. Finance.—The end of the year 1100 removed a load of anxiety as regards the year's balance-sheet. Anticipations were gloomy when the budget was framed as nothing but a deficit could be forecasted. Instead, the State exchequer found itself in possession of a surplus of Rs. 10,27,436. The revenue and receipts amounted to Rs. 2,10,67,565 and the expenditure charged to revenue to Rs. 2,00,40,129. The expenditure showed an increase of Rs. 5,58,098. Against capital expenditure, we had to bear Rs. 4,390 on the Quilon-Trivandrum Railway and Rs. 78,034 as the State's contribution towards the Cochin harbour scheme.

As the result mainly of the careful husbanding of finances during the last administration, the assets of the State amounted at the end of 1100 to Rs. 2,08,05,408. The liabilities were Rs. 1,23,85,835, resulting in a credit balance of Rs. 84,19,573 against Rs. 74,74,561 at the end of 1099. Against the capital liability of the State on account of the Shencotta-Quilon Railway which amounted at the end of March 1925 to Bh. Rs. 1,36,80,218, there is a sinking fund which, at the end of 1100, was Rs. 36,34,120 and should be adequate, at the present rate of contribution, to pay off the entire liability on the due date in 1945. In the calculation of the value of assets have to be included the capital outlay of Rs. 54,08,563 on the Quilon-Trivandrum line and the investment on the Kodayar Irrigation Project totalling Rs. 80,48,822. Our actual cash in treasuries together with our realisable investments stood at Rs. 1,90,63,000 which included deposits in the State Savings Bank amounting to Rs. 45,88,788. But some of the investments are in the Government of India 3 per cent. and 3½ per cent. securities and if their current market price alone is taken into account there will be a reduction of about Bh. Rs. 17·5 lakhs under assets.

6. Land and Land Laws.—In a country like ours where agriculture is the mainstay of the people and land is looked upon as the only safe investment, the importance of satisfactory land laws cannot be over-estimated. The Land Assignment Regulation and the Rules issued thereunder have regularised the sale of the areas of land at the disposal of the Government. The attention of the Government has been drawn to some hardships resulting from the Town Lands Rules now in force and certain defects in the Revised Puduval Rules generally. It is doubtful whether all the *puduval* lands registered during the last decade have been brought under actual cultivation and whether the State has really derived the maximum benefit therefrom. Speculation in land is to be deprecated in a country where the extent of waste lands that can grow remunerative food-crops or other commercial products is limited and where, for a variety of reasons, the possibilities of intensive cultivation have not as yet been adequately realised. Statistics of such uncultivated lands will show whether the abuse is so great as to warrant legislation to penalise non-cultivation.

7. Land Records Maintenance.—The scheme of land records maintenance, introduced in the middle of 1096, formed the subject of adverse criticism. The complaints related to the organisation of the department, the agency employed on the work and the rules prescribed. A committee with a non-official majority was appointed in August 1925 to go into the whole question of land records maintenance and make recommendations. The recommendations of the committee were placed in the shape of an official resolution before the Legislative Council on the 4th November 1925, and substantially accepted by the Council. The Government have

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